OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

BY

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1982

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation to all those who have helped make this study possible. In particular, the writer wishes to thank Dr. Charles Forgnone for his continuous guidance and support as chairman of his doctoral committee. The other members of the doctoral committee, Dr. Phillip Clark, Dr. James Longstreth, Dr. Cecil Mercer, Dr. William Reid, and Dr. Joseph Wittmer, are also thanked for their counsel and support. Thanks are also extended to all of the teachers of exceptional students in the Orange County Public Schools who participated in this study.

Special thanks are given to Dr. Shelby Morrison for the assistance and encouragement she has provided to the writer throughout his doctoral program. For their support and assistance, the writer also wishes to thank Dr. Stephen Leggett, Dr. Patricia Maher, Dr. Charles Dziuban, Mrs. Betty Yates, and Mrs. Pam Wells.

Most importantly, love and appreciation are given to the writer's wife, Roberta, whose love, support, and encouragement provided him with the impetus to make this goal a reality.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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August, 1982

Chairman: Dr. Charles Forgnone
Major Department: Special Education

This study was designed to examine the causes of occupational stress in classroom teachers of exceptional students. The relationships between perceived levels of stress and variables associated with job conditions and professional characteristics of the teachers were also studied.

Two data collection instruments, developed by the author of this study, were administered to 302 teachers of exceptional students in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. The Survey of Stress Causes was designed to investigate those events in the teaching situation which were most stressful to the teachers. The Teacher Stress Questionnaire was designed to measure the amount of stress perceived by the teachers in the work situation.

The findings of this study led to the following major conclusions:

1. Significant differences were found in the sources of job-related stress among the exceptionality areas.

2. Low salary, excessive paperwork, and insufficient time to help each student were among the major stressors for all exceptionality groups.

3. Job conditions variables were significantly related to perceptions of job-related stress in the teachers surveyed. The professional characteristics of the teachers were not found to be significant contributors to differences in perceived levels of occupational stress.

4. Teachers of specific learning disabled students reported the highest level and teachers of intellectually gifted students reported the lowest level of occupational stress when compared to the other exceptionality groups surveyed.

5. The results of this study could be utilized by school administrators to develop differentiated stress management plans to help exceptional education teachers cope with their job-related stress.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1970's, the associated phenomena of job-related stress and teacher burnout have progressively received more attention in the literature. Many investigators have studied the causes of job-related stress, the symptoms associated with the problem, and ways to reduce the amount of stress on the job, either organizationally or individually (Kets de Vries, 1979; Miller, 1979; Weiskopf, 1980).

Most of the studies on job-related stress in education have dealt with regular classroom teachers and administrators. However, several authors have suggested that stress on the job may be more prevalent and more severe in educators who must cope with the unique characteristics of exceptional students and their parents, and with the federal mandates pertaining to the education of exceptional students (Bensky, Shaw, Gouse, Bates, Dixon, and Beane, 1980; Roddy, 1979).

The needs of the exceptional child, and the resulting demands placed upon exceptional education teachers and administrators in attempting to meet those needs, produce different types of problems for the exceptional educator in addition to those experienced by the regular educator. Parents of exceptional students raise qualitatively, if not quantitatively, unique issues with which the exceptional educator must cope. The mandates of Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, require additional paperwork in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other program placement procedures, with which the regular classroom teacher need not be as concerned. This added work load is a new source of stress to exceptional educators. The concomitant psychological burden of increased militancy among the parents of exceptional students, the ever increasing demands for more comprehensive support services, and the trend toward accountability in education, along with the criticism currently being addressed toward the public schools, all contribute to the job-related stress experienced by the exceptional educator (Bensky, et al., 1980; Roddy, 1979).

The Stress Pheonmena

The concept of stress was introduced by Hans Selye in 1936. Selye (1976) defined stress as the physiological response of the body to any demand made. While Selye is considered the pioneer of stress research, he actually was preceded by Walter B. Cannon, of the Harvard Medical School, who published Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage in 1953. These two authors established stress as a meaningful psychological concept and attempted to define the phenomenon by inference from a sequence of physiological changes within the body. These changes are typified by a disturbance of the body's homeostasis in which the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal system is activated. Through a series of biochemical and surgical experiments conducted in the 1950's, Selye gave a precise physiological meaning to the concept of systemic stress which still persists today.

Later authors observed psychological reactions to stress and inferred definitions of the concept from certain observable behavioral responses (Appley and Trumbull, 1967; Pines, 1980; Woolfolk and Richardson, 1978). Appley and Trumbull (1967) summarized the general conclusion drawn from studies of psychological stress as follows:

> (1) Stress is probably best conceived of as a state of the total organism (response) under extenuating circumstances, rather than as an event in the environment. (2) A great variety of different environmental conditions is capable of producing a stress state. (3) Different individuals respond to the same conditions in different ways. (4) The same individual may enter into a stress state in response to one presumable stressful condition and not to another. (5) Consistent intra-individual, but varied inter-individual, psycho-physiological response patterns occur. (p. 11)

Woolfolk and Richardson (1978) pointed out that an event may not be stressful unless it is perceived as a threat by the individual.

Several authors suggested that stress is not synonymous with distress. Terborg (1978) defined stress as a positive or negative reaction which occurs when there is a substantial imbalance (perceived or real) between environmental demand and the response capability of the individual. Tanner (1976) also supported the potentially positive view of stress, pointing out that "some stress is necessary to well-being, and a lack can be harmful" (p. 8). Among the constructive effects of stress are those listed by Coleman (1972). He emphasized that stress may lead to (1) increased competencies, (2) increased self-understanding, (3) new approaches to problems, (4) more realistic goals and expectations, and (5) increased stress tolerance. He further stated that "stress may either 'sensitize' the individual and lower his stress tolerance, or it may 'immunize' him and increase his feelings of self-confidence and his ability to cope with given stress situations" (p. 126). According to Tanner (1976), "stress is any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person . . . and while the physiological response to such demands is surprisingly uniform, the forms of stress are innumerable" (p. 7).

Freudenberger (1977) termed the on-going, unrelieved accumulation of negative job-related stress as "burnout." He pointed out that the process may be so gradual, the individual may not be aware of it. Hendrickson (1979) described teacher burnout as an occupational hazard to which all teachers are sooner or later exposed. The effects of teacher burnout vary with the individual. Some teachers may choose to leave the profession while others stay on the job with decreased efficiency, counting the days until Friday, or until retirement. Other teachers learn coping skills which enable them to deal effectively with their occupational stress.

While human responses to stress may vary, the common symptoms, according to Hunsaker, Mudgett, and Wynee (1975), include anxiety, physical illness, depression, and apathy. Maslach's (1976) findings indicated as job-related stress develops and increases, the individual becomes emotionally detached from his or her clients, treats them in a progressively more dehumanizing manner, and becomes less effective on the job. Other recent research suggested that persons who spend a large proportion of their time in direct contact with their clients are more susceptible to stress and burnout (Pines and Kafry, 1978). This is probably due to the fact that frequent and sustained on-the-job contact is more emotionally demanding for certain professionals, such as teachers and social service workers. To escape the pressures and in order to revitalize their diminishing energies, these professionals may retreat from the demands made upon them. High absenteeism may, therefore, be another symptom of job-related stress (Daley, 1979; Harlin and Jerrick, 1976).

The factors which cause job-related stress, often described as "stressors," are not easily identified because of the subjective nature of the perceived tensions (Pines and Kafry, 1978; Reed, 1976). Weiskopf (1980) suggested that an individual's ability to cope with occupational stress is determined by the interaction of several factors, such as health, life events, and job requirements. Cooper and Marshall (1976) pointed out that there are several different sources of stress. Among these are personality characteristics, stress in the work environment, and extra organizational sources of stress, such as family crises, financial problems, etc. In addition, problems associated with identifying the sources of stress are due to the fact that there are few particular events which are universally stressing. What is stressful for one individual may be invigorating for another. DeShong (1981) investigated sources of teacher stress and summarized them as follows: (1) having more to do than can be done well, (2) lack of fun on the job, (3) lack of structure and poor management, (4) getting behind, (5) poor relationship with supervisor, (6) lack of recognition, (7) evaluation by comparison with others, (8) stress-prone supervisors, (9) lack of direction, and (10) lack of control over situation.

DeShong (1981) concluded that severe stress is experienced by special educators for two basic reasons: (1) their jobs possess characteristics that are known to create potentially highly stressful conditions; and (2) their preparation has not included learning to produce good, healthy emotions, while functioning in an unpredictable, sometimes difficult, and always changing environment. She further emphasized that the stress that teachers experience is the result of the interaction of the characteristics of their environment, their thinking responses, and the condition of their bodies.

While a number of variables have been identified as probable sources of job-related stress among educators and the other helping professions, there is a scarcity of data specifically addressing occupational stress in teachers of exceptional students. Intervention programs to reduce feelings of frustration, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion among exceptional education teachers must focus upon specific external stress-producing variables. This study was designed to investigate sources of stress and associated emotional and behavioral manifestations as perceived by public school teachers of exceptional students in the Orange County, Florida, Public Schools, in order to provide direction for future stress reduction efforts.

Statement of the Problem

The fact that there is a high level of negative stress associated with teaching exceptional students is reported in the literature by several authors (DeShong, 1981; Weiskopf, 1980; Bensky et al., 1980; and Roddy, 1979). This study investigated the sources of this stress, as perceived by exceptional education teachers. The degree of stress currently being experienced by individual exceptional education teachers was examined, and the relationships of several variables (teaching experience, grade level of students, certification and training, and type of school) to the stress measures of exceptional education teachers were analyzed.

Justification of the Study

The identification of the sources of negative stress among exceptional education teachers, and the quantification of stress levels among individuals in this group, would assist administrators in developing stress management plans to increase teaching effectiveness, decrease absenteeism and staff turnover due to burnout, and ideally lead to higher levels of job satisfaction among exceptional education teachers.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by this writer's commitment not to intrude upon the privacy of the participants. Consequently, questions on the data collection instruments were carefully screened by a panel of judges so that intrusive and potentially threatening, or offensive, items were eliminated. Also, participants were not asked to identify themselves.

A second limitation of the study was that the personality characteristics of the participants were not assessed, and extra organizational sources of stress were not investigated. The study was limited solely to job-related stress.

Questions of the validity and reliability of the data collection instruments were also limiting factors in this study. A prior search of the literature by this writer produced no standardized and normed data collection instruments which would adequately address the issues investigated by this study.

This study was limited to exceptional education classroom teachers and did not include physical therapists, occupational therapists, or speech therapists. Also, no comparisons were made with regular educators.

Delimitations of the Study

The results of this study may not be generalized beyond the self-selected sample of exceptional education teachers currently employed by the Orange County, Florida, Public School District.

Definition of Terms

Job-related stress. Perceptions of frustration, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion reported by exceptional education teachers and quantified by scores on this writer's data collection instruments.

Teacher burnout. Physical, emotional, and attitudinal exhaustion caused by the demands existing in the environment in which teaching is conducted.

Exceptional education teacher. Teacher of exceptional students in a self-contained special class or in a special resource room.

Exceptional student. Kirk (1972) defined an exceptional student as

> the child who deviates from the average or normal child (1) in mental characteristics, (2) in sensory abilities, (3) in neuromuscular or physical characteristics, (4) in social or emotional behavior, (5) in communication abilities, or (6) in multiple handicaps to such an extent that he requires a modification of school practices, or special educational services, in order to develop to his maximum capacity. (p. 4)

Educable mentally handicapped (EMH). An educable mentally handicapped student is one who is

> mildly impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence generally falls between two (2) and three (3) standard deviations below the mean and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations. (Florida Department of Education, 1980, p. 36)

Trainable mentally retarded (TMR). A trainable mentally retarded student is one who is

> moderately or severely impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence generally falls between three (3) and five (5) standard deviations below the mean and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations. (Florida Department of Education, 1980, p. 36)

Profoundly mentally retarded (PMR). A profoundly mentally retarded student is one who is

> profoundly impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence generally falls below five (5) standard deviations below the mean and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below age and cultural expectations. (Florida Department of Education, 1980, p. 36)

Emotionally handicapped (EH). An emotionally handicapped student is one who

> after receiving supportive educational assistance and counseling services available to all students, still exhibits persistent and consistent severe behavioral disabilities which consequently disrupt the student's own learning process. (Florida Department of Education. 1980, p. 40)

Specific learning disabled (SLD). A specific learning disabled student is one who

> exhibits a disorder in one (1) or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, reading, talking, writing, spelling, or arithmetic. They do not include learning problems which are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, to emotional disturbance, or to an environmental deprivation. (Florida Department of Education, 1980, p. 41)

Intellectually gifted (IG). An intellectually gifted student is one who

> has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance. The mental development of a gifted student is two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean. (Florida Department of Education 1980, p. 42)

Public Law 94-142. Federal law which regulates education of handicapped children in the public schools.

Individualized Education Program (IEP). A written statement that defines the special education and related services to be provided to the exceptional student.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II contains a review of current literature. Chapter III presents the design of the study. The population selected and the method of data collection and analysis are discussed in this chapter. Chapter IV deals with the statistical analysis of the data. Presentation of significant findings are included in this chapter. Chapter V consists of conclusions drawn from the data analysis, the implications gleaned from this information, and suggestions for future research. References and the appendices, which contain the data collection instruments and supportive tables, follow Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When an individual faces obstacles or problem situations in his/her occupational environment, such obstacles place adjustive demands, negative stress, upon that individual. This chapter is primarily concerned with reporting the research concerning the different types of adjustive demands due to negative stress, or distress, and also the unique and individual causes of negative stress as experienced by educators and similar professionals and, more specifically, by exceptional education teachers.

The effects of negative stress are usually classified in one of three response categories: physiological, behavioral, and emotional. For the purpose of this chapter, each type of stress will be considered separately, but all are closely interrelated and usually combine to form a unique pattern of response in each individual. Each classification of stress is most effectively approached from a study of the symptoms exhibited by an individual as he/she attempts to cope with the adjustive demands placed upon him/her as the result of a stressful situation.

Physiological Reactions to Stress

In 1831, a London physician named James Johnson described a surprisingly accurate physiological reaction to stress as "a sudden gust of passion, a transient sense of fear, an unexpected piece of intelligence--in short, any strong emotion of the mind will cause the heart to palpitate, the muscles to tremble, the digestive organs to suspend their function, and the blood to rush in vague and irregular currents through the living machine" (Tanner, 1976, p. 10). In the 1920's, Harvard physician Walter Cannon provided the first empirical description of an immediate automatic physiological response to stress based on his experiments with cats and dogs. He concluded that while individual responses may vary in degree, the response always follows a general pattern. Cannon called this basic response a "fight-or-flight pattern." The almost instantaneous bodily changes in reaction to stress, first noted by Cannon and later replicated by other researchers, have the effect of shutting down unnecessary physiological activities to mobilize energy for top priority tasks, such as fight or flight, in reaction to danger (Tanner, 1976).

From studies of injured or immobilized rats, Hans Selye described a detailed physiological sequence in reaction to stress. Selye extended his research to humans and attempted to identify stress as the basic cause of all human illness. While many of Selye's theories remain unsubstantiated, his work added significantly to the study of the physical bases of human behavior (Tanner, 1976).

Some recent investigators have suggested that stress may be related to cancer. Lawrence LaShan studied 450 cancer patients at the Institute of Applied Biology in New York, finding that a majority of cases had suffered severe emotional trauma, such as the loss of a parent, in early life. He concluded that this loss resulted in the patient rechanneling his/her emotional energies later in life as a parent, or in a career. This new channel was then blocked by divorce or loss of a job and, in some cases, the first cancer symptoms appeared as soon as six months after the second trauma (Tanner, 1976).

Other researchers have studied the physiological reactions of educators to stress because, as Dillon (1978) stated, "schools are stressful places. They are growing more so almost daily and little is currently done to prepare teachers to cope with stress" (p. 30). In summarizing a report on the physiological responses of classroom teachers to stress, Saville (1981) proposed that "teaching is a stressful occupation. It requires high levels of performance and accountability, but teachers have little or no control over important variables that influence their effectiveness in the classroom" (p. 648).

Saville sent a questionnaire listing 49 potential sources of stress to 3,500 regular education teachers in the Clark County, Nevada, School District. A majority (51.4%) of the 1,468 respondents said they had experienced stress-related physical illness during the previous four years, while 24.1% claimed to have experienced stress-related psychological illness. The disorders most often mentioned were (in rank order) tension headaches, sleeplessness, hypertension, colitis, ulcers, asthma, heart problems, respiratory problems, lower back pain, stomachache, teeth grinding, and kidney infection. Seasonal patterns of illness were cited by 48% of the respondents. November and April were the months most frequently mentioned. Teaching was considered a highly stressful occupation by 65% of the sample. Only 9% of the sample found teaching to be a low stress occupation. About 58%

indicated that they had seriously considered leaving the profession because of stress-related problems. Saville (1981) ended his report by saying that his findings are consistent with those of other studies across the United States. These studies, he suggested, do not address the basic question, which is "how long can we expect teachers to continue trying to educate the young in such physically and psychologically damaging conditions?" (p. 648).

High rates of teacher absenteeism have been associated with on-the-job stress by several authors (Harlin and Jerrick, 1976; Dixon, Shaw, and Bensky, 1980). As Harlin and Jerrick (1976) noted,

> studies have shown that more teachers are home with colds and flu on Mondays and Fridays than any other day. This leads some physicians to conclude that occasionally a cold may be a body's subconscious way of saying that it needs rest and relief. It may be more acceptable to call in and say you have a cold than it is to say you can't cope or that you need a rest. (p. 57)

Extensive studies of teacher absenteeism across the nation indicated an alarming increase in costs, both to instructional quality and in terms of substitute teacher pay (Ricken, 1980; Cooper, Dreyfuss, and Boekhoff, 1980).

If teacher absenteeism is associated with high job-related stress, efforts to reduce this stress may affect teacher absentee rates as well. In the 1976-1977 school year, the Dade County, Florida, School District instituted an incentive program in an attempt to reduce teacher absenteeism. In this program, the individual schools were reimbursed, by 80%, for unused substitute teacher salaries which remained in the accounts. The results of this incentive program, according to Cooper, Dreyfuss, and Boekhoff (1980), were disappointing. By the end of the second year, teacher absenteeism was down only 1%! The failure of this incentive program to reduce teacher absenteeism may well have been due to the fact that the program did not address one of the basic reasons teachers are absent from work, the on-the-job stress of daily classroom duties.

Behavioral Reactions to Stress

While the pressures of daily life are unavoidable, individual reactions to negative stress appear to be both internally and externally determined. The severity of the stress seems to depend upon the characteristics of the demand, the individual's personal limitations and resources, and the situational context within which the stress occurs. On a behavioral level, the degree of stress depends not only on an individual's personality and characteristic coping skills, but also on how he/she perceives the stress situation (Coleman, 1972).

Two cardiologists, Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman, have linked personality attributes and concomitant ways of reacting to negative stress with cardiac disease. In books and lectures, these authors have warned the public about the dangers of Type A behavior. Type A behaviors, as suggested by Friedman and Rosenman (1975), include clenched or table pounding fists, nervous tics, grinding teeth, a habitual sense of temporal urgency, a tendency to always compete or challenge others, and striving to do two or more things simultaneously.

Susceptibility to heart disease, according to these authors, is almost three times greater among persons with these personality characteristics. The authors suggest a "reengineering" of the Type A individual's daily life to replace old, harmful behaviors and to reduce negative stress in daily life.

That stress is an important negative factor among educators is evidenced by the number of recent articles and books on the subject. Most of this literature deals with the behavioral manifestations of negative stress in the classroom and with perceived sources of stress. Harlin and Jerrick (1976) asserted that "mental health problems are one of the most common reasons for teachers missing work" (p. 56). These authors also attributed the rising rate of alcoholism among teachers to the stress involved with teaching. The National Institute of Education found the subject of job-related stress important enough to publish James Terborg's (1978) report "Individual and Group Behavior in Educational Organizations under Environmental Stress." This document presented a framework for the analysis of organizational stress and suggested factors that facilitate the reduction of stress among teachers. Hendrickson (1979) explored teacher burnout and asked "is 'exhausted' an apt description of your present state of mind? You may be suffering from teacher burnout. But don't despair; you're not alone, and there _is_ a cure" (p. 37).

Leffingwell (1977) investigated the role of counselors in the reduction of stress in middle school teachers. He listed the overt behaviors of teachers suffering from stress as follows: (1) hand wringing; (2) developing pallor, rash or other changes in the appearance of the skin; (3) shaking of hands, feet, and legs as if suffering from a palsy; (4) squirming or being unable to sit still; (5) verbalizing protests in the form of rationalization (e.g., "if the kids don't learn, it's not our fault"); (6) protesting by nonverbal behavior such as being absent from meetings where the teacher's input is important; (7) excessive talking, usually in the form of rambling, defensive non-problem-solving verbalizations; (8) emotionally withdrawing as if in a state of apathy when the real feeling is intense anxiety; (9) denial of reality when the reality is frustration, anger, or depression; (10) lashing out verbally at students in inappropriate ways; and (11) displacing aggression on family members when the threat of confronting a fellow educator or parent is too great (Leffingwell, 1977).

A school psychologist also looked at stress in "Slow Down, You Move Too Fast" (Gray, 1979). He stated that "teachers who fall in the stress danger zone suffer from what I call 'rushism' or the 'road runner' syndrome" (p. 53). He suggested techniques, such as the relaxation response or transcendental meditation to combat burnout.

The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation perceived stress-related problems among educators to be pervasive enough to publish a Fastback on the subject. In Dealing with Stress: A Challenge for Educators, author William C. Miller (1979) stated that "surplus stress burdens teachers and administrators with fatigue, headaches, indigestion and a host of other ailments" (p. 7). Miller (1979) reported a study, conducted by Instructor, in which 75% of 9,000 respondents indicated that they were absent from school due to stress-related problems. He concluded that

> the reaction of many educators working in pressure cooker schools has been to take all available sick leave, to retire from teaching early, to collapse in bed at the end of the school day in order to marshall enough energy to face the next day. Many find it impossible to participate in outside interests, which are necessary for renewal of enthusiasm. Family relations suffer, adding further to the problems of stress. (p. 8)

Robert Ricken (1980) investigated teacher burnout from an administrator's perspective in "Teacher Burnout--A Failure of the Supervisory Process." He suggested that "the real challenge in combatting teacher burnout is with the superior teacher" (p. 23). He pointed out that the administrator spends a disproportionate amount of time with the new or the weak teacher, but that the superior teacher must be considered as well, since without administrative attention, the master teacher has only to maintain present levels of performance. Ricken (1980) stated that "teachers who are personally 'growing' continue to glow brightly and don't burn out. The supervisor and the supervisory relationship must provide the stimulus" (p. 23).

Gibbons and Phillips (1980) offered advice to combat burnout. These authors have developed a one-day workshop that prepares practicing teachers for designing and directing their professional development. They advise "shape or be shaped; influence or be influenced. The less self-directing we are, the more vulnerable we become to external influences on our behavior" (p. 252). They urge that an individual select a professional goal, create a plan of action, and formalize the above by negotiating a learning contract.

Patricia Weiskopf (1980) focused on stress in exceptional education teachers in the September issue of Exceptional Children. Based on a survey of the literature, she summarized the behavioral symptoms of burnout. Initially, according to Weiskopf (1980), the burnout victim may experience only a vague feeling of personal distress. At this stage, the teacher may not want to go to work. As burnout evolves, boredom, fatigue, irritability, mild depression, and feelings of overwork may surface. These symptoms may last for several weeks. A short vacation may alleviate these symptoms, while staying on the job without such relief advances the degree of burnout. The teacher may become less flexible and may respond to students with cynicism or negativism. The teacher may begin to limit social contacts and withdraw from people and activities. The teacher may miss faculty meetings, eat lunch alone, skip coffee breaks, and leave school early or late to avoid contact with other teachers. Others on the staff will begin to note a decrease in the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom. The teacher may work longer hours and yet contribute less to the education of his or her students. If these subtle signs of burnout go undetected and the source of stress continues, more serious symptoms may emerge. Some of the problems commonly associated with an advanced degree of stress are alcohol and drug abuse, high absenteeism, marital conflict, mental illness, or excessive smoking. Weiskopf (1980) noted that such symptoms may be related to personal problems outside the job but that work-related stress also imposes itself upon all aspects of an individual's physical and mental health.

Emotional Reactions to Stress

In the previous sections, the physiological and behavioral reactions to stress have been discussed. Often closely interrelated, both bodily functions and overt behaviors may be observed and measured. This last section on reaction to stress is largely theoretical in that the response is not overt and cannot be quantified. The basic assumption underlying this section, however, is that there is an emotional component to stress and that this emotional component should not be overlooked in that it contributes equally to an individual's unique pattern of reaction to stress.

The emotions which result from the demands upon an individual in a stressful situation may be classified as feelings of frustration, conflict, or pressure. Frustration is experienced when an individual's desires are thwarted. The obstacles which an individual encounters may be either mental, physiological, or environmental. Frustrations resulting from personal limitations and mistakes are likely to be particularly stressful since they may lead to an insult to one's self-concept. DeShong (1981) devoted a section of her book, The Special Educator: Stress and Survival, to this type of frustration. She explored the myth of the special educator as a "superperson," proposing that stress-prone exceptional educators

> experience an internal sense of pressure in our work as special educators because we buy the idea that when and only when we accomplish worthwhileness will we have the right to be relaxed and comfortable on the job. This guiding idea provides daily impetus for our struggle attitude toward the job. Special education as a field becomes the battleground for acting out our fight to prove worthwhileness. In an earlier section it was emphasized that your body reacts with a stress response when you perceive your well-being in danger. If you believe you must have and deserve the right to be comfortable and self-accepting on the job (as determined by one measuring stick or another), you will perceive your well-being threatened frequently, in fact, almost continuously. Caught in the fight for worthwhileness you will make unreasonable and insatiable demands on yourself regarding the level of performance you must provide and the level of approval from others you must have to abandon the internal, tiger-fighting stress response. (p. 81)

Stress, as a result of conflict, comes not from the blocking of a single goal, but from a conflict between two needs or goals. The conflict between family and organizational demands is often cited by female teachers as a source of stress (DeShong, 1981). Ritz and Cashell (1980) pointed out a possible source of conflict for teachers. They ask "to what extent does the phrase 'private cold war' characterize the working relationship between teachers and their supervisors?" (p. 77).

Robson (1981) stated that the demands of Public Law 94-142 are one potential source of stress because, "while special educators have been sensitive in the past to their roles as 'outsiders' in the affairs of building management, nothing in the new legislation provides them with the rationale or the necessity to increase their sphere of influence" (p. 378). Yet the impact of the law upon the total system has been profound. Exceptional education teachers and administrators have found themselves overwhelmed by abrupt and unplanned organizational and role changes as they attempt to comply with the mandates of this law (Bensky et al., 1980).

Pressures to achieve or to behave in a particular way, whether internally or externally motivated, may also be categorized as sources of emotional stress (Coleman, 1972). The concepts of maintenance and homeostasis permeate the majority of studies concerned with internal human motivation. It is hypothesized that human energies are mobilized towards meeting any deficiency and, when resolved, return to a state of equilibrium. It is while within a state of disequilibrium that feelings of pressure cause an individual to intensify his/her behavior or to change direction (Coleman, 1972).

Maslow has suggested that humans are internally motivated by a hierarchy of needs which ascends from meeting basic physiological requirements through the development of full potential and self-actualization (1954; 1969). The lower-level needs take precedent, according to Maslow, and only when fully satisfied, can the individual focus attention and effort on his/her quest for fulfillment. Sullivan (1979) gathered data on perceived sources of anxiety, within the school setting, from 12 experienced and 12 preservice teachers. She classified five of the 14 most significant factors as "survival skills." These classroom survival skills, which were perceived by preservice teachers as being major contributers to anxiety, included class control, discipline, and parental interference. When viewed within the classroom context, they may be seen as corollaries to Maslow's lower- and mid-level needs of safety and esteem. Evaluation of the inservice teachers' responses to sources of anxiety indicated that higher-level needs, such as time for oneself, leaving school early for graduate courses, or administrators who forget what it's like to be teachers, received greater attention among experienced teachers (Sullivan, 1979).

While internal sources of stress are self-imposed, external pressures may also cause stress (Miller, 1979). He stated that "all educators, at times, suffer from lack of resources or feel they do not have the right materials to do a good job. Many also feel they lack control over their own time and experience frequent interruptions. These professional constraints are a major source of situational stress" (p. 11).

Studies of Teacher Stress

When teachers consistently report feelings of stress in their working lives, their well-being, as well as their work effectiveness, may be affected. Because of this, studies of stress are important to identifying causes and possible remedies for prevention and control (Pratt, 1978).

The Chicago Teachers' Union conducted a study of teacher stress, concluding that the most stressful events (in rank order) were being involuntarily transferred, managing "disruptive" children, receiving notification of an unsatisfactory performance, threat of personal injury, and overcrowded classrooms (Cichon and Koff, 1978). It is obvious, according to Cichon and Koff (1978), that the emotional reactions to the professional demands upon educators can be both self-imposed and/or situational and may combine to contribute to negative feelings of frustration, conflict, or pressure in the individual.

Saville (1981) surveyed teachers on 49 potential sources of stress and found the following eight to be considered the most important: student violence, overcrowded classrooms, threat of lawsuit, paperwork, disagreement with principal, involuntary transfers, discipline, and loss of personal time. Landsmann (1979) cited anti-public education press bias, extra work loads, and declining community respect for the profession as a whole as major sources of teacher stress.

Gallery and Eisenbach (1981) listed the factors that most often produce stress in the human services professions. These factors include excessive work load, lack of perceived success with the client, excessive case load, and responsibility for the welfare of others. These factors, acting singly or in concert, are said to cause an intolerable amount of distress which eventually leads to burnout. Gallery and Eisenbach (1981) also reported a study of 42 teachers and 43 paraprofessionals who were asked to rank their level of job satisfaction and level of perceived stress on a scale of 1 (high) to 5 (low). Teachers indicated mean rankings of 2.26 in job satisfaction and 1.95 for stress. When teachers were asked to rank the degree to which they were capable of handling stress, they indicated that they were highly capable of handling stress.

Sparks (1979) reported the following results of a job-satisfaction questionnaire administered to 50 regular education teachers: (1) 46%

were dissatisfied with their jobs; (2) 25% indicated that they did not intend to stay in teaching until retirement; (3) 54% said that they would switch jobs if they could find one with equivalent pay and fringe benefits; (4) 70% felt trapped in their present jobs; (5) 91% said that they had little or no influence in curriculum or policy decisions in their school; (6) 75% said that their jobs were, to a large extent, physically or emotionally stressful; (7) 68% indicated that they had a high-quality relationship with their peers; (8) 43% noted high-quality relationships with students; and (9) 23% believed that they had high-quality relationships with administrators.

While studying the variables of teacher absenteeism and turnover, both assumed to be indicators of a teacher's desire to remain within the system, Spuck (1974) found that strong community support and teacher agreement with district goals and policies appeared to prevent teacher absenteeism. Also, Spuck noted that teachers tended to stay in their jobs longer in schools where they experienced pride of workmanship and where social interaction was pleasant.

Bensky et al., (1980) developed a questionnaire specifically designed for exceptional education teachers to explore the relationship between the implementation of Public Law 94-142 and teacher stress. The questionnaire was administered to 135 teachers who were grouped according to teaching assignment. The three groups were regular classroom teachers, exceptional education classroom teachers, and resource room teachers. Items for the questionnaire were based on a review of the literature on stress in teaching and on an analysis of the requirements of Public Law 94-142. A review of the data indicated that the exceptional education teachers have experienced new stress because of the number of meetings required by Public Law 94-142, and that the presence of clear role expectations greatly reduces stress for this group. Writing Individualized Education Programs (IEP's) and the paperwork associated with due process were rated low as stressors (Bensky et al., 1980).

Roddy (1979) also speculated about the problems of exceptional educators as they deal with requirements of Public Law 94-142. He concluded that

> the pressure of having to teach, mold, and shape the learning behaviors of handicapped children day after day, and to continually do this with motivation, calmness, and variety, eventually can affect the mental health of the educator trying to achieve these goals. Good mental health on the part of the teacher is considered to be of utmost importance in the learning situation. Educators would agree that teacher personality and mental health are as important as the mastery of the subject and method of presentation. (p. 5)

Gallery and Eisenbach (1981) questioned the assumption that factors such as excessive work load, lack of perceived success with the client, and responsibility for the welfare of others are major contributors to burnout among exceptional educators. They suggest that other causes such as job ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload are most likely to be sources of occupational distress in exceptional educators.

Zabel and Zabel (1981) surveyed 601 teachers of exceptional students and found that teachers with master's degrees reported less distress than teachers with bachelor's degrees. Inexperienced teachers were more susceptible to stressful conditions than were experienced teachers. Junior high school teachers were reported to be higher risks for burnout than teachers at other grade levels. Overall, they found that teachers of emotionally disturbed students were encountering the highest levels of occupational distress.

Sparks (1979) emphasized the need for inservice education in stress management. He stated that "inservice education should provide opportunities for teachers to identify personal sources of job dissatisfaction, and assist them in creating individualized programs to modify pathogenic work environments or alleviate emotional distress. These programs might include instruction in assertiveness and interpersonal skills, as well as training in stress-reducing techniques such as meditation and biofeedback" (p. 448).

Stress Management

Recent investigations have indicated that there are two major approaches to stress reduction in the classroom. They are the organizational/external approach and the individual/internal approach. Kets de Vries (1979) pointed out that "meeting the psychological needs of the individual has traditionally been a low organizational priority. Top management has been more interested in fitting the man to the job than fitting the job to the man" (p. 3). He recommended that the administration assess the impact of the organization upon its members and restructure the organization based on that assessment.

Lazarus (1976) proposed four tasks for the administrator to help reduce job-related stress: (1) diagnose environmental factors influencing the organization or individual; (2) plan and design possible intervention strategies that focus on the stress conditions aimed at diminishing or managing stress conditions; (3) implement appropriate change strategies; and (4) evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and the mental health status of the organization or individual.

According to Zaleznick, Kets de Vries, and Howard (1977), "reactions to stress occur in individuals in the form of emotional and physical symptoms. The consequences of these reactions appear in reduced motivation to work and lowered productivity, both of which result in economic costs to organizations" (p. 151).

Cruickshank (1981) asked teachers to identify their problems and as a result outlined the following teacher needs:

> (1) Affiliation. Teachers need to establish and maintain good relationships with others in the school, both staff and teachers.
> (2) Control. Teachers want students to behave appropriately.
> (3) Parent Relationships. Teachers want to relate well with adults outside the school who are important in the lives of children.
> (4) Student Success. Teachers want students to possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help them attain academic and social success.
> (5) Time. Teachers want to be effective managers of their personal and professional lives. They would like more time to plan, to work with students, to evaluate student progress, and more time for themselves. (p. 403)

According to Applegate, Flora, and Lasley (1980), the type of support and encouragement that new teachers receive from the people around them is influential in shaping their attitudes about themselves as teachers. One way beginning teachers gauge such support is through interactions with others. What new teachers come to believe about themselves appears to be influenced by what they read into the contacts they make with other people. First-year teachers in particular appear highly self-conscious and sensitive to what others might think and feel about them.

Meadow (1981) suggested that the major key to the prevention and cure of stress is the provision of support systems. Professionals need to work toward building their own support networks, and administrators need to be available to help in the process. There are steps that can be taken to reduce stressful situations. Most of these steps involve change of some kind: a change in pace, a change in pattern, a change in place, situation, or approach. According to Meadow (1981), the need for recognition of teaching achievement is a real one. Teachers need to hear from their colleagues, their students, parents, and supervisors that someone knows and cares about the time, effort and creativity that go into lesson planning, field trips, and projects. Meadow (1981) further stated that "it is the most dedicated, talented, hard-working teachers who are most likely to suffer from burnout" (p. 21).

In general, organizational approaches to stress reduction attempt to analyze the organizational contribution to stress and to redesign into more effective organizational structures and patterns of decision making. Hunsaker, Mudgett, and Wynee (1975) summarized this approach and stated that "organizational programs for stress control may be required in the future. These programs may include designs for change in organizational structure as well as increased emphasis on group decision making and methods of developing individual skills for coping with stress" (p. 318).

Adams (1979) pointed out additional organizational strategies which may affect on-the-job stress levels. These strategies include "a full two-way flow of information, identification and change of stress provoking norms, team building, role clarification, stress education, annual physical examinations, which include stress assessment and counseling, and the establishment of clear objective and performance standards for all employees" (p. 36).

Many organizational stress management programs fail to produce optimal results because they fail to recognize the uniqueness of the individuals involved. Hunter (1977) stated that "particular events cannot be labeled as universally stressful because people's feelings and reactions differ. What is stressful for one person could be stimulating to another" (p. 122).

Individual approaches to stress reduction are also utilized in stress management. Lazarus (1976) suggested that to cope successfully with stress, an individual must accomplish the following tasks: (1) tolerate or relieve some or all of the attendant stress; (2) maintain rewarding interpersonal relationships; (3) maintain a sense of personal worth; and (4) meet the specific requirements of the stressful tasks, or utilize available opportunities to accomplish any of those tasks.

Adams (1979) proposed several self-management techniques which can be introduced to teachers to assist them in stress reduction. These general techniques include good nutritional habits, good exercise habits, self-awareness, relaxation techniques, time management, and life planning strategies. Clearly, the exceptional education administrator's responsibility in the individual/internal approach to stress management is to provide teachers with the awareness of the problems of job-related stress and teacher burnout and to introduce methods of stress reduction.

Leffingwell (1977) suggested that school guidance counselors could take an active role in reducing teacher stress through individual and group conferences. He proposed that

> catharsis is not enough! Counselors can provide more than an opportunity to ventilate frustration, anxiety, or anger. They can help teachers find meaningful alternatives to problem situations by changing the focus from what should be done to what can be done, within realistic parameters of the role of a teacher or counselor. (p. 287)

Weiskopf (1980) reviewed the research relating to burnout among the helping professions and teachers and concluded that stress is prevalent among special education personnel and that it is detrimental to effective education. She suggested the following ways to prevent burnout in exceptional education teachers:

(1) Special educators need to know in advance the type of emotional stress their particular job entails.
(2) Teachers need to set realistic goals for themselves and their students.
(3) Special educators need to delegate responsibility for such tasks as paperwork and non-teaching duties to aides or parent volunteers to relieve some pressure and reduce work load.

> (4) Special educators should avoid isolation from other staff.
> (5) While on the job, teachers need to break up the amount of continuous, direct contact they have with children.
> (6) Staying mentally alert while away from the job is significant to preventing burnout.
> (7) Physical exercise is recommended to relieve stress and tension.
> (8) To alleviate boredom, teachers need to participate in active or passive hobbies and special interests not relating to the job. (p. 21)

Summary

The preceding discussion reviewed the literature concerning the physiological, behavioral, and emotional reactions to negative stress. The majority of these studies emphasized that these three classifications are interrelated and are dependent upon individual characteristics, such as personality or life circumstances. Several authors (Cooper and Marshall, 1976; DeShong, 1981; Hunter, 1977; Miller, 1979; Pines and Kafry, 1978; Coleman, 1972; Tanner, 1976) also suggested that the degree of stress experienced by an individual is determined by that individual's perception of the event. In other words, there are no universals associated with stress, neither in etiology nor in symptomatology.

Studies investigating stress in the classroom and the associated phenomena of teacher burnout were also reported. It has been suggested by some authors (Bensky et al., 1980; Roddy, 1979; Robson, 1981) that, while stress is an occupational hazard for all teachers, the specific mandates of Public Law 94-142 add to the exceptional education teachers' feelings of anxiety and pressure.

Two approaches to stress management were reviewed. The first, the organizational or external approach, assesses the impact of the organization upon its members and restructures the organization based on this assessment. The individual/internal approach focuses on the individual's awareness of the problem and proposes self-management techniques aimed at alleviating or reducing stress.

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree and sources of stress currently being experienced by exceptional education teachers in order to give some direction to exceptional education administrators for the design and implementation of effective stress management programs in their schools. Differences among teachers of the various exceptionalities as well as those functioning within different delivery systems, e.g. exceptional education schools or in regular schools, were explored to provide differentiation for the design of stress management programs.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

As described in Chapter II of this study, the negative effects of occupational stress may vary according to the personalities and coping skills of individual teachers and to the conditions related to the particular teaching situation. One of the factors which may be associated with occupational stress is the responsibility for the unique needs of exceptional students. This study was designed to investigate the causes of negative stress and to identify the amount of stress experienced by exceptional education classroom teachers in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. Specific variables explored in connection with job-related stress were (1) the job conditions (exceptionality area, grade level of students, type of class taught, regular or special school assignment) and (2) the professional characteristics (teaching experience, years in present position, degree(s) earned, certification in field) of exceptional education teachers participating in the study.

Population

The population for this study consisted of exceptional education teachers in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. The sample was composed of classroom teachers of educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally retarded, profoundly mentally retarded, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, and intellectually gifted students in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District.

Approximately 400 exceptional education classroom teachers are currently employed by the Orange County, Florida, Public School District to teach in the exceptional education areas listed above. Of this number, 280 exceptional education teachers are assigned to regular elementary and secondary schools. The remaining 120 are teaching in exceptional education schools. All exceptional education teachers of educable mentally handicapped (EMH), trainable mentally retarded (TMR), profoundly mentally retarded (PMR), emotionally handicapped (EH), specific learning disabled (SLD), and intellectually gifted (IG) students were asked to participate in this study. This writer expected to receive a 75% return from the teachers surveyed. The number and percentage of teachers working in each exceptionality and the location of classrooms are described in Table 1.

Table 1

Number and Percentage of Teachers
Working in each Exceptionality
and the Location of Classrooms

Exceptionality	Number of Teachers	Percentage	Regular School	Special School
Educable Mentally Handicapped	86	22	86	
Trainable Mentally Retarded	28	07		28
Profoundly Mentally Retarded	43	11		43
Emotionally Handicapped	57	14	32	25
Specific Learning Disabled	146	36	122	24
Intellectually Gifted	40	10	40	___
Total	400	100	280	120

Instrumentation

Two data collection instruments, developed by the author of this study, were administered to the participating exceptional education teachers. Copies of the data collection instruments are included in Appendix A.

The Survey of Stress Causes (SSC) was designed to investigate those events in the teaching situation which are most stressful to the exceptional education teacher. The items for the survey instrument were selected after a review of job-related sources of stress in the teaching environment (Gallery and Eisenbach, 1981; Cichon and Koff, 1978; Weiskopf, 1980; Miller 1979).

The SSC consisted of 30 items which briefly described negative situations which may exist in the educational environment. Participants were asked to rate each negative stressor, on a scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high), according to the amount of stress it caused in their present teaching assignment. Space was included on the SSC for the participants to write in any other negative stress-related situations not described in any of the 30 items.

The second data collection instrument was The Teacher Stress Questionnaire (TSQ). This instrument was designed to measure the amount of stress perceived by the exceptional education teacher in the work situation. The questions were developed after a review of several studies on teacher stress (Bensky et al., 1980; Cichon and Koff, 1978; Sullivan, 1979; Sparks, 1979; Saville, 1981; Maslach, 1976; Dixon, Shaw and Bensky, 1980).

The TSQ contained 30 questions which elicited reactions of the participants to potentially stressful teaching situations, to teaching as a profession, and to various indicators of stress susceptibility. The participants responded to each question by checking one of four choices on a Likert-type scale of (1) almost never, (2) sometimes, (3) frequently, and (4) almost always. Several of the questions were positively phrased; for example: "Are you happier teaching than you thought you would be?" A number of the questions were negatively phrased; for example: "Do you feel burned out from your work?" Reverse scoring of positively phrased questions was utilized in order to produce item scores with consistent meaning.

In addition to the data collection instruments, the participants were asked to complete a Descriptive Data Form to indicate the exceptionality taught, the grade level of their students, the type of class taught, the number of years in teaching, the number of years in present position, highest degree earned, special education certification, and the type of school assignment. A copy of the Descriptive Data Form can be found in Appendix A.

Validity

Two techniques were utilized to investigate the validity of the data collection instruments. The first procedure involved a review of the individual items on each instrument by a panel of 20 judges composed of administrative and other support personnel from the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. All of the judges were familiar with the exceptional education teaching environment. The panel members included the following: six special school principals, six coordinators of the various exceptional education programs located in regular schools, two project administrators, three school psychologists, two research specialists, and the administrator of the district-wide testing program.

The panel of judges evaluated items on the two instruments according to the stated purpose of each instrument. A copy of the Item Rating Sheet is included in Appendix A. In order for an item to be selected for use, 15 or more of the judges had to indicate that it was acceptable. This procedure provided support for the face validity of the two data collection instruments.

The second procedure consisted of pilot testing the instruments with graduate students at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. In order to investigate the congruent validity of The Teacher Stress Questionnaire, a criterion instrument, The Teaching Anxiety Scale, was also administered to the pilot test groups.

According to Parsons (1973), The Teaching Anxiety Scale (TCHAS) contains a variety of self-report statements about teacher reactions to teaching and about attitudes toward teaching as a profession. Coefficients of internal consistency for The Teaching Anxiety Scale, based on split-half reliabilities on several administrations of the Scale, ranged from .87 to .94. The stability of the TCHAS was evaluated through the use of the Pearson Product Moment test-retest correlation procedure. Several test-retest groups produced stability coefficients ranging from a low of .60, with two months between administrations, and .95, with one to three days between administrations (Parsons, 1973).

Parsons (1973) assessed the congruent validity of the TCHAS by correlating it with two other self-report measures of anxiety. These measures were The Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale and The Test Anxiety Scale. Coefficients ranging between .30 and .45 ($p < .05$) were reported based on several groups surveyed. The correlations, according to Parsons (1973), indicated that the TCHAS shared common variance with The Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale and The Test Anxiety Scale.

The Teacher Stress Questionnaire and the criterion instrument, The Teaching Anxiety Scale, were administered to two classes of graduate students at the University of Central Florida. The coefficient of correlation between The Teacher Stress Questionnaire and The Teaching Anxiety Scale, based on a sample of 29 subjects, was .55. The correlation implied a degree of shared variance ($p < .05$) between The Teacher Stress Questionnaire and The Teaching Anxiety Scale.

Reliability

The writer's data collection instruments, Survey of Stress Causes and Teacher Stress Questionnaire, were administered to 29 graduate students at the University of Central Florida in two sessions, one week apart. Reliability coefficients of .82 were achieved on both instruments utilizing the test-retest method for determining stability of the instruments over time. Internal consistency of the instruments was investigated with the odd-even correlation procedure. The coefficient of internal consistency for the Survey of Stress Causes was .89. The Teacher Stress Questionnaire produced a correlation of .81.

A final correlation was calculated to determine if the writer's data collection instruments possessed common variance. The scores of 58 subjects who completed both instruments were compared and the coefficient of correlation between the two instruments was .49, which indicated a degree of shared variance ($p < .05$) between the instruments.

As a result of the pilot testing of the data collection instruments and the review by the panel of judges, this writer was satisfied that the instruments were effectively measuring what they were designed to measure in a consistent and stable manner.

Statement of the Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that causes of negative stress would be comparable for all exceptional education teachers regardless of the exceptionality taught. It was also hypothesized that total stress scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire would be equivalent for all exceptional education teachers regardless of differences in job conditions or professional characteristics among these teachers. The following hypotheses were tested for the purposes of this study:

1. There will be no significant difference in the weighting of stressors by teachers from each exceptionality area as measured by The Survey of Stress Causes.

2. There will be no significant difference in the total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the following job conditions of the teachers: (1) exceptionality area, (2) grade level of students, (3) type of class taught, and (4) assignment in regular or special education school.

3. There will be no significant difference in the total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the following professional characteristics of the teachers: (1) years of teaching experience, (2) years in present position, (3) degree(s) earned, and (4) certification in field.

Data Collection

The data were collected during faculty and/or inservice meetings of the participating exceptional education teachers. Those teachers not available through faculty or inservice meetings were contacted and asked to complete the data collection instruments.

Data Analysis

Analysis of variance was performed and tested at the .05 level of confidence in order to determine significance of differences among mean scores. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, and Bent, 1975) was the computer program used to complete these analyses. Data were also analyzed along several dimensions. Mean, standard deviation, and variance statistics were computed for each of the groups within the variables studied.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of this study. The study was designed to investigate the sources of negative stress associated with teaching exceptional students, and to measure the degree of stress perceived by classroom teachers of the educable mentally handicapped (EMH), trainable mentally retarded (TMR), profoundly mentally retarded (PMR), emotionally handicapped (EH), specific learning disabled (SLD), and intellectually gifted (IG) students in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. Variables examined were (1) the individual stressors as defined and measured by the data collection instrument, The Survey of Stress Causes (SSC); (2) job conditions, such as the exceptionality area, grade level of students, type of class taught, assignment in regular or special school; and (3) professional characteristics, such as years of teaching experience, experience in present position, degree(s) earned, and certification in field. Job conditions and professional characteristics variables were compared to the amount of stress perceived by teachers and quantified on the data collection instrument, The Teacher Stress Questionnaire (TSQ).

Of the 400 exceptional education classroom teachers currently employed to teach in the exceptionalities selected for this study, a total of 302 (75%) completed this writer's data collection instruments. The number and percentage of teachers, by exceptionality area, participating in this study and the location of their classrooms are contained in Table 2.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Participants in each Exceptionality Group and the Location of their Classrooms

Exceptionality Group	Number of Participants	Percentage	Regular School	Special School
Educable Mentally Handicapped	65	21	65	
Trainable Mentally Retarded	28	09		28
Profoundly Mentally Retarded	41	14		41
Emotionally Handicapped	47	16	22	25
Specific Learning Disabled	92	30	72	20
Intellectually Gifted	29	10	29	
Total	302	100	188	114

An analysis of variance was utilized to test for significant differences in the sources of stress, as perceived by teachers of the selected exceptionalities, and to determine if significant differences exist in the levels of stress reported by these teachers. The null hypotheses were tested with a significance level of less than or equal to .05 designated as the criterion for rejection of the null hypotheses.

Analysis of the First Hypothesis

It was predicted in Hypothesis I that there would be no significant difference in the weighting of stressors by teachers from each exceptionality group as measured by The Survey of Stress Causes. An analysis of variance among exceptionality groups for each item on The Survey of Stress Causes is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance Among Exceptionality Groups on Items 1 through 30 of The Survey of Stress Causes

Item	Stressor	Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
1.	Wide range of ability levels in classroom	Between	47.68	5	9.53	10.07*	0.000
		Within	280.25	296	0.94		
2.	High student/ teacher ratio	Between	52.15	5	10.43	8.68*	0.000
		Within	355.39	296	1.20		
3.	Inconsistent student discipline practices	Between	73.80	5	14.76	13.87*	0.000
		Within	315.00	296	1.06		
4.	Demands on after school time for work activities	Between	73.80	5	14.76	13.87*	0.000
		Within	299.18	296	1.01		
5.	Disruptive students	Between	62.42	5	12.49	13.59*	0.000
		Within	272.22	296	0.92		
6.	Pressure of being a good model	Between	5.47	5	1.09	1.27	0.276
		Within	254.77	296	0.86		
7.	Excessive paperwork	Between	23.57	5	4.71	4.70*	0.000
		Within	296.81	296	1.00		
8.	Inadequate school facility	Between	23.10	5	4.62	4.10*	0.001
		Within	332.88	296	1.12		

Table 3--continued

Item	Stressor	Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
9.	Lack of community respect for profession	Between	10.36	5	2.07	1.81	0.108
		Within	377.31	296	1.14		
10.	Little recognition for job well done	Between	15.54	5	3.10	2.79*	0.017
		Within	329.63	296	1.11		
11.	Lack of teaching materials	Between	22.95	5	4.59	4.28*	0.000
		Within	317.20	296	1.07		
12.	Limited career advancement opportunities	Between	25.80	5	5.16	4.25*	0.000
		Within	358.69	296	1.21		
13.	Required participation in staff development	Between	3.79	5	0.75	0.95	0.448
		Within	236.06	296	0.79		
14.	Inadequate planning time	Between	58.07	5	11.61	11.37*	0.000
		Within	302.36	296	1.02		
15.	Low salary	Between	14.15	5	2.83	2.58*	0.026
		Within	324.44	296	1.09		
16.	Supervisory duties	Between	18.91	5	3.78	4.83*	0.000
		Within	231.55	296	0.78		
17.	Conflict between personal and professional life	Between	9.76	5	1.95	2.18	0.056
		Within	243.16	296	0.89		

Table 3--continued

Item	Stressor	Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
18.	Conflicts with parents	Between	9.52	5	1.90	2.32*	0.043
		Within	243.16	296	0.82		
19.	Evaluating student progress	Between	13.61	5	2.37	2.92*	0.013
		Within	246.55	296	0.83		
20.	Observation and assessment by principal	Between	11.87	5	2.37	2.92*	0.013
		Within	240.59	296	0.60		
21.	Threat of personal injury at school	Between	11.27	5	2.25	3.71*	0.002
		Within	179.89	296	0.60		
22.	Conflicts with other staff members	Between	16.44	5	3.28	4.16*	0.001
		Within	233.73	296	0.79		
23.	Lack of support from district administration	Between	22.55	5	4.51	4.83*	0.000
		Within	276.13	296	0.93		
24.	Inappropriate placements of students	Between	48.30	5	9.66	10.36*	0.000
		Within	275.86	296	0.93		
25.	Lack of communication with support personnel	Between	20.76	5	4.15	5.07*	0.000
		Within	242.46	296	0.81		
26.	Unmotivated students	Between	57.93	5	11.58	11.75*	0.000
		Within	291.74	296	0.98		

Table 3--continued

Item	Stressor	Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
27.	Lack of parental cooperation	Between	47.27	5	9.45	8.81*	0.000
		Within	317.66	296	1.07		
28.	Numerous staff meetings and committees	Between	18.15	5	3.63	4.17*	0.001
		Within	257.38	296	0.87		
29.	Writing and maintaining student IEP's	Between	38.80	5	7.76	8.12*	0.000
		Within	282.66	296	0.95		
30.	Insufficient time to help each student	Between	73.70	5	14.74	15.67*	0.000
		Within	278.33	296	0.94		

*$p < .05$

Significant differences, at the .05 level, were found in the weightings of 26 of the 30 items of The Survey of Stress Causes presented in Table 3. The 10 items with the most significant F values (in rank order) were (1) insufficient time to help each student, (2) inconsistent discipline practices in school, (3) disruptive students, (4) unmotivated students, (5) inadequate planning time, (6) inappropriate placements of students, (7) wide range of ability levels, (8) high student/teacher ratio, (9) writing and maintaining student IEP's, and (10) lack of parental cooperation. The high frequency of items found to be significant at the .01 level (73%) is noteworthy.

The four items that were not significantly different among the groups were (1) pressure of being a good model, (2) lack of community respect for the profession, (3) required participation in staff development, and (4) conflict between personal and professional life.

It was predicted in Hypothesis I that there would be no significant difference in the weighting of stressors by teachers from each exceptionality group, as measured by The Survey of Stress Causes. Statistically significant differences in weightings, at the .05 level, of 26 of the 30 stressors were found to be associated with the type of exceptionality taught. Therefore, the data analysis supported rejection of the null hypothesis.

Further analysis of the data, presented in Appendix B, indicates that teachers of the intellectually gifted perceived the sources of job-related stress with generally greater homogeneity than did teachers of the other exceptionalities (15 SSC items). Teachers of the emotionally handicapped demonstrated the greatest variance (8 SSC items). Comparison of the mean scores on each item of the SSC revealed that teachers of the emotionally handicapped had the highest mean score on 17 items. Teachers of specific learning disabled students had the highest mean score on 10 items. Teachers of intellectually gifted students had the lowest mean score on 14 items. The teachers of specific learning disabled students and the teachers of emotionally handicapped students did not have the lowest mean score on any item. Teachers of profoundly mentally retarded students did not have the highest mean score on any item.

Variations in the weightings and corresponding rankings of stressors by each group of exceptional education teachers are provided in Appendix C. Wide range of ability levels in the classroom and high student/teacher ratio were of most stress to teachers of TMR students and of least stress to the teachers of PMR students. Inconsistent student discipline practices in school were of greatest stress to teachers of emotionally handicapped compared to the other groups. The PMR group was least concerned about discipline matters. Demands on after school time for work-related activities was a major source of stress to teachers of intellectually gifted students and a significant problem for teachers of PMR students. The other groups were not as concerned about work demands outside of school time.

Disruptive students created high stress results from all of the exceptionality groups, while the pressure of being a good model at all times was not stressful to any of the groups. Excessive paperwork was perceived as a problem by all of the groups. Inadequate school facility, although weighted low by all groups, was of some concern to PMR and IG teachers. Lack of community respect toward the profession was a major stressor for the PMR group and of less concern to the other groups.

Little recognition for a job well done was a significant stressor to the PMR teachers and an average stressor for the other exceptionality groups. Lack of teaching materials was of major stress to the teachers of PMR students. Teachers of PMR, EH, and TMR students were most stressed by the limitations on career advancement. None of the groups expressed significant concern about required staff development. Inadequate time to plan was of most concern to IG, EH, and SLD teachers. Low salary was rated as highly stressful by all exceptionality areas. Supervisory duties were of some concern to teachers of EMH students.

The stress caused by conflicts between personal and professional life was rated high by teachers of IG students and low by the other groups. Conflicts with parents and evaluating student progress were of most stress to teachers of IG students. Observation and assessment by administrator was a major stressor for the teachers of PMR students and of minor stress to the other groups. Threat of personal injury at school and conflicts with other staff members were not rated as stressful by any of the groups.

Lack of support from district administration was not given a high weighting by any of the groups. Inappropriate placements of students was given a fairly high rating by teachers of EH students. Lack of communication with support personnel was not weighted as a high stressor by any of the groups. Unmotivated students were rated highly stressful by teachers of SLD, EMH, and IG students. Lack of parental cooperation was rated fairly high as a stressor by all groups except teachers of IG students. Numerous staff meetings and committees were rated low as stressors by all groups. Writing and maintaining student IEP's was given a high stress weighting by IG, EMH, and SLD teachers. Insufficient time to help each student was rated as a major source of stress by each group.

Analysis of the Second Hypothesis

It was predicted in Hypothesis II that there would be no significant difference in the total stress scores of the exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the job conditions of the teachers. The four variables which were analyzed in order to assess the impact of job conditions upon teacher stress were (1) exceptionality area, (2) grade level of students, (3) type of class taught, and (4) assignment in regular or special school.

The statistical treatment applied to the study of the four job conditions variables associated with scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire for the Variables Representing Job Conditions

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between Exceptionalities	3896.38	5	779.27	6.16*	0.000
Within Exceptionalities	37407.33	296	126.37		
Between Grade Levels	1085.51	3	361.83	2.68*	0.047
Within Grade Levels	40218.21	298	134.96		
Between Type of Class Taught	402.04	1	402.04	2.94	0.087
Within Type of Class Taught	40901.67	300	136.33		
Between School Assignments	812.49	1	812.49	6.02*	0.014
Within School Assignments	40491.22	300	134.97		

$^*p < .05$

Significant differences in the stress scores of the teachers were found in three of the four job conditions variables. The exceptionality area, the grade level of students, and school assignment produced F values significant at the .05 level. The F value of the type of class taught, resource room or self-contained, did not reach significance at the .05 level. Further analysis of these data was conducted using Scheffe's test. This information can be found in Appendix D.

The association between the job conditions of teachers and the mean scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire was investigated in Hypothesis II. For the purpose of this study, the targeted job conditions were: exceptionality area and grade level of students, type of class taught, and assignment in regular or special school. With the exception of type of class taught, all job conditions variables produced F values significant at the .05 level, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Additional statistics descriptive of the job conditions variables are presented in Appendix D. On the variable relating to area of exceptionality taught, teachers of SLD students reported the highest level of stress (mean of 67.16). Teachers of EMH students reported a mean stress score of 63.13, while teachers of EH students had a mean score of 62.97. Lower levels of stress were perceived by teachers of PMR students (mean of 60.17), teachers of TMR students (mean of 58.82), and by teachers of IG students (mean of 55.82). On the variable associated with grade level of students, the preschool/kindergarten and elementary grade teachers reported higher mean stress scores than teachers at the junior and senior high schools.

The variable concerned with the type of class taught, either self-contained or resource room, indicated slightly higher stress scores for resource room teachers compared to teachers of self-contained classes. Exceptional education teachers assigned to regular schools perceived higher levels of stress than those assigned to special schools.

Analysis of the Third Hypothesis

It was proposed in Hypothesis III that there would be no significant difference in the total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the professional characteristics of the teachers. The four variables which were analyzed in order to assess the impact of professional characteristics upon teacher stress were (1) years of teaching experience, (2) years in present position, (3) highest degree earned, and (4) certification in field.

The statistical treatment applied to the study of the four professional characteristics variables associated with scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Analysis of Variance on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire for the Variables Representing Professional Characteristics

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between Years of Teaching Experience	4222.00	28	150.78	1.11	0.325
Within Years of Teaching Experience	37081.71	273	135.83		
Between Years in Present Position	3948.75	17	232.28	1.76*	0.032
Within Years in Present Position	37354.96	284	131.53		
Between Degrees Earned	263.64	1	263.64	1.92	0.166
Within Degrees Earned	41040.07	300	136.80		
Between Certified and Non-Certified	309.05	1	309.05	2.26	0.133
Within Certified and Non-Certified	40994.66	300	136.64		

$^*p < .05$

Significant differences in the stress scores of the teachers were found in one of the four professional characteristics variables. The variable, years in present position, produced an F value which was significant at the .05 level. The other variables, years of teaching experience, degrees earned, and certification in field, did not reach significance at the .05 level. Further analysis of these data was conducted using Scheffe's test. This information can be found in Appendix E.

The relationship between the professional characteristics of the teachers and the mean scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire was analyzed in Hypothesis III. Variables included in professional characteristics of exceptional education teachers were years of teaching experience, years in present position, highest degree earned, and certification in field. With the exception of years in present position, the professional characteristics variables did not produce significant F values at the .05 level, and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Further analysis of the variables associated with the professional characteristics of the teachers is presented in Appendix E. The average number of years of teaching experience reported in Appendix E was eight years. The highest mean stress scores were at eight years of experience (mean of 67.77) and four years of experience (mean of 67.06). The lowest mean stress scores were 50, at the 23rd year, and 52, at the 19th, 22nd, and 28th years.

The average number of years in present position, as described in Appendix E, was four years. The highest mean score (68.72) was at the sixth year. The lowest mean scores were 53, at the 16th year, and 53.91, at the seventh year.

Of the total sample of 302 exceptional education teachers presented in Appendix E, 42% had masters degrees and a mean score of 61.73. The remaining 58% were at the bachelors degree level and were represented by a mean stress score of 63.62. As shown in Appendix E, 91% of the sample of exceptional education teachers were certified in field.

Non-Statistical Findings

In order to allow for voluntary input from the participants, they were asked to list other stress-related concerns. Of the 302 participants, 47 of them made comments in this section of The Survey of Stress Causes. Their comments were classified into the following problem areas: (1) student problems, (2) problems with administrators, (3) problems with other staff members, and (4) personal problems.

Comments related to student problems were (1) not enough time to help each student because of paperwork and other placement requirements; (2) not enough time to plan, to test, to teach the students; (3) lack of materials and curriculum to help all students; (4) no time to get away from students; (5) inability to motivate students to learn; (6) having same students year after year; (7) not enough alternatives and resources to help students.

Responses related to problems with administrators were (1) lack of involvement by administrator; (2) lack of interest by administrator in the program; (3) lack of consideration by administrator; (4) lack of support and reinforcement from principal; (5) no effective communication from administrator.

Problems concerning other staff members were (1) lack of communication with other teachers; (2) working with out-of-field teacher who doesn't understand program; (3) no cooperation between regular and special teachers; (4) teacher aides don't know what is required of them; (5) faculty members are not able to get along.

Personal concerns of the teachers were (1) can't pay all of the bills; (2) low pay and little chance for advancement; (3) working second job and going to school; (4) family problems; (5) no relaxation time; (6) lack of personal growth.

Non-Work-Related Stress

In order to estimate the proportion of job-related stress compared to the total amount of stress, as perceived by exceptional education teachers, the sample group was asked "what percentage of the stress in your life is caused by your work situation?" The responses to the question ranged from 0% to 100%. The median response was 50%, indicating that one-half of the sample felt that 50%, or more, of the stress in their lives resulted from their work. Another 50% of the teachers felt that conditions other than those associated with their jobs contributed more to their perceptions of being stressed.

Summary of Findings

The findings from the data analysis confirmed that sources of negative stress in the teaching environment of exceptional educators were significantly different when associated with the type of exceptionality taught. It was also found that job conditions of the sample of exceptional education teachers were significantly related to the level of stress experienced on the job. Finally, it was determined that the professional characteristics of the sample of exceptional education teachers were not significantly associated with perceived level of stress.

Voluntary comments of participants were recorded and classified into student problems, problems with administrators, problems with other staff members, and personal problems. Additionally, 50% of the sample group of teachers rated stress outside of the work situation as contributing most to their feelings of stress.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was designed to examine the causes of occupational stress in classroom teachers of exceptional students. The relationships between perceived levels of stress and several variables pertaining to job conditions and professional characteristics of the teachers were also investigated. The results of this study could be utilized to assist school administrators in developing stress management plans to increase teaching effectiveness, decrease absenteeism and staff turnover, and improve the teaching situation of exceptional education teachers.

The population for this study consisted of exceptional education teachers in the Orange County, Florida, Public School District. The sample was drawn from exceptional education classroom teachers of educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally retarded, profoundly mentally retarded, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, and intellectually gifted students.

Two data collection instruments, The Survey of Stress Causes and The Teacher Stress Questionnaire, were administered to the teachers at inservice and faculty meetings. Of the 400 teachers included in the selected sample group, 302 (75%) completed a descriptive data form and the data collection instruments. Responses were received from 75% of the EMH group, 100% of the TMR group, 95% of the PMR teachers, 82% of the EH group, 63% of the SLD teachers, and 72% of the IG group.

The completed data collection instruments were scored, tabulated, and computer analyzed. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie et al., 1975) was the computer program used to analyze the data. An analysis of variance was utilized to test for differences in the sources and levels of stress as reported by the participating teachers. The following hypotheses, expressed in the null form, were tested at the .05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis I: There will be no significant difference in the weighting of stressors by teachers from each exceptionality area as measured by The Survey of Stress Causes.

Hypothesis II: There will be no significant difference in the total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the following job conditions of the teachers: (1) exceptionality area, (2) grade level of students, (3) type of class taught, and (4) assignment in regular or special education school.

Hypothesis III: There will be no significant difference in the total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire as a result of the following professional characteristics of the teachers: (1) years of teaching experience, (2) years in present position, (3) degree(s) earned, and (4) certification in field.

Discussion of Results

Significant differences, at the .05 level, were found among the exceptionality groups in the weighting of 26 of the 30 sources of stress included on The Survey of Stress Causes. It should be noted that 22 of the items were found to be significant at the .01 level of confidence. Of the 26 significantly different sources of stress among the exceptionality groups, 14 of the stressors are within the purview of the building administrator, four are the responsibility of district level administration, and another six are jointly shared between building and district level administration. The remaining two stressors are policy issues which relate to the school board and the State legislature.

Of the 15 most stressful items rated by the sample of teachers, the six which directly relate to the responsibility of the building administrator (in rank order) are (1) disruptive students, (2) unmotivated students, (3) lack of parental cooperation, (4) wide range of ability levels in the classroom, (5) little recognition for job well done, and (6) inconsistent student discipline practices in school. Of the remaining nine most stressful factors, seven are the joint responsibility of building and district level administration. These seven stressors (in rank order) are (1) insufficient time to help each student, (2) excessive paperwork, (3) writing and maintaining student IEP's, (4) high student/teacher ratio, (5) inadequate planning time, (6) lack of community respect toward profession, and (7) lack of teaching materials. Two of the major stressors, low salary and limited career advancement opportunities, are primarily controlled by school board and legislative decisions.

Hypothesis I predicted that there would be no significant difference in the weighting of stressors by teachers from each exceptionality area as measured by The Survey of Stress Causes. Since 26 of the 30 stressors were significant at or below the designated .05 confidence level, Hypothesis I was rejected.

It was predicted in Hypothesis II that no significant difference in total stress scores of exceptional education teachers on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire would be found as a result of the job conditions of the teachers. The four variables included in the description of job conditions, for the purposes of this study, were (1) exceptionality area, (2) grade level of students, (3) type of class taught, and (4) assignment in regular or special education school.

Teachers of specific learning disabled students registered the highest mean stress score compared to the other exceptionality groups. The greatest variance was found in the stress scores of teachers of profoundly mentally retarded students. The lowest mean stress score and least variance were exhibited by the teachers of intellectually gifted students. Teachers of emotionally handicapped and educable mentally handicapped students had mean scores slightly above the combined group mean. Teachers of profoundly mentally retarded and trainable mentally retarded students had mean scores below the combined group mean.

Although Zabel and Zabel (1981) reported that teachers of emotionally disturbed students were encountering the highest level of occupational stress, this study found that teachers of specific learning disabled (SLD) students were perceiving the highest degree of job-related stress compared to the other exceptionality groups. One possible explanation for the high relative ranking of the SLD group is that approximately 75% of these teachers are assigned to resource rooms located in regular elementary and secondary schools. Resource room teachers provide, on the average, about one hour per day of instruction to an average of 35 SLD students each. The students attend regular classrooms for most of the school day. The student/teacher ratio in an SLD resource room averages from 8:1 to 10:1, depending on the total number of students and hours that each student is served in a school. The SLD resource room teacher is responsible for diagnostic testing of all SLD program applicants in the school. Consultation with the regular classroom teachers is a major responsibility of the resource room teacher. These teachers are also responsible for writing and maintaining IEP's for 30 to 40 students during a school year.

The contact with a relatively large number of students and parents, the corresponding paperwork responsibility, the diagnostic evaluations, and consultations with regular teachers can amount to a stressful work situation for the SLD resource room teachers. In analyzing the results of an extensive study on stress and Public Law 94-142, Bensky et al., (1980) found that resource room teachers perceived higher levels of stress than teachers of self-contained classes. Their explanation for the difference in stress perception was that the role of self-contained classroom teachers has not been changed by Public Law 94-142 to the extent of the resource room teachers. They noted that

> resource room teachers are now heavily involved in educational diagnosis, placement team meetings, writing and monitoring IEP's, consulting, and handling due process paperwork, in addition to providing direct service to handicapped students. (p. 27)

Roddy (1979) also studied the impact of Public Law 94-142 on exceptional education teachers. He concluded that the requirements of this law have contributed considerably to the pressures felt by resource room teachers.

Since 25 of the 29 teachers of intellectually gifted (IG) students were resource room teachers, and their stress scores were the lowest of any group, the differences between SLD resource room and IG resource room should be explored. The obvious difference between the two exceptionalities is that SLD students are experiencing difficulty in academic learning. Although intellectually gifted students present unique challenges to the creativity and intellectual capacity of the teacher, these students do not normally experience the failure and frustration felt by learning disabled students. The pressures of teaching students with learning problems, and the impact of the more stringent rules governing education of handicapped students, would appear to be important factors in explaining the discrepancy in the amount of stress perceived by SLD resource room teachers compared to IG resource room teachers.

On the second job conditions variable, grade level of students, the elementary and preschool/kindergarten teachers rated higher in perceived stress levels than the junior high and senior high teachers. The difference among the grade levels was significant at the .05 level of confidence. This finding differs from the results of a study by Zabel and Zabel (1981). They found that junior high school teachers were higher risks for burnout than teachers at other grade levels.

Although resource room teachers had a higher mean score than self-contained class teachers on the variable type of class taught, the difference was not significant at the .05 level. Teachers in regular schools reported higher stress than teachers in special schools. The difference between perceived levels of stress of teachers assigned to regular schools and teachers assigned to special schools was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Since three of the four job conditions variables had F ratios which were significant at the .05 level of confidence, Hypothesis II was rejected. The job conditions of the exceptional education teachers are important factors to consider when attempting to understand the reasons why some teachers appear to be more stressed than others.

Predicting that the professional characteristics of exceptional education teachers would not be significantly associated with mean scores on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire, Hypothesis III investigated the variables related to years of teaching experience, years in present position, highest degree earned, and certification in field.

On the variable, years of teaching experience, higher stress scores were found in those teachers with eight or less years of teaching experience. The combined mean score for the 185 teachers with eight or less years of experience was 64.48. The combined mean score for the 117 teachers with more than eight years of experience was 60.11. This difference implies that there is some reduction in stress perception with increased years of teaching experience; however, the difference in stress scores between the years of experience levels was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. Zabel and Zabel (1981) found that inexperienced teachers were more susceptible to stressful conditions than were experienced teachers.

Slightly less than one-half of the sample of teachers have been in their present teaching positions for two or less years (143). The combined mean stress score for this group was 61.62, which is below the combined mean score for all teachers, 62.83. In contrast, the 111 teachers with either 3, 4, 5, or 6 years in their present positions had a combined mean score of 66.32, which is above the mean for all teachers surveyed. The combined mean score for the 48 teachers with seven or more years in their present positions was 58.54. Since there was a large decrease in number of teachers between the third and fourth years in present position, this may be the critical period for teachers in deciding whether to remain in their present positions. The higher stress scores for teachers in their third and fourth years could be attributed to the desire for a position change. The F ratio for this variable was significant at the .05 confidence level.

Teachers with bachelors degrees had mean stress scores above those teachers with masters degrees. However, the difference in stress levels was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. In the study conducted by Zabel and Zabel (1981), masters degree teachers reported less distress than teachers with bachelors degrees.

The comparison between teachers certified and not certified in field was affected by the small number of out-of-field teachers participating in this study. Only 26 teachers, 9% of the total number participating, were not certified in field. Even though the non-certified teachers had mean stress scores lower than certified teachers, the discrepancy in numbers between the two levels prevents drawing any valid conclusion. The F value for this variable did not reach significance at the .05 confidence level.

Unlike the job conditions variables, the variables included in the professional characteristics of the sample of exceptional education teachers did not indicate significant differences in the established levels as associated with perceived job-related stress. Since three of the four variables did not discriminate significantly at the .05 level of confidence, Hypothesis III was accepted.

Non-statistical findings consisted of voluntary comments, describing other stress-related situations, received from about 15% of the participants. For the purposes of this study, the voluntary comments were grouped into the following categories: (1) student problems, (2) problems with administrators, (3) problems with other staff members, and (4) personal problems. In general, the comments centered around the lack of time to teach because of other duties, such as paperwork, testing, and meetings. Also, lack of communication with administrators and regular classroom teachers, and personal problems related to salary, need for a second job, and taking graduate classes were listed as concerns by some of the responding teachers.

Stress outside of the work situation was not included in the data collection or statistical analysis of the data. However, one question was asked in order to survey the sample group's perception of the percentage of stress in their lives caused by their work situation. The responses to this question were placed in a rank-ordered frequency distribution and the median percentage was found to be 50%. This writer realizes that stress created by family problems, health concerns, financial worries, and the many other stressful events in life impacted the job-related stress perceptions of the sample group of teachers. Weiskopf (1980) emphasized that an individual's ability to cope with occupational stress is determined by the interaction of several factors, such as health, life events, and job requirements. Cooper and Marshall (1976) also pointed out that extra organizational sources of stress, such as family crises and financial problems are important contributors to stress in the work environment. Some teachers felt that practically all of the stress in their lives was attributable to their jobs. Others perceived their work stress as being minimal compared to their other problems. Further study concentrating on the perceptions of teacher stress between work and non-work variables, and the interaction between the two, would be necessary to reach any conclusion in this matter.

Conclusions

Data relevant to the hypotheses tested and the questions posed in this study yield the following conclusions:

1. A significant difference was found in the sources of stress in the teaching environment among the exceptionality areas participating in this study. Low salary, excessive paperwork, and insufficient time to help each student were major stressors for all exceptionality areas.

2. Building administrators have primary control over six and joint responsibility with district level administrators for another seven of the 15 major sources of stress perceived by the exceptional education teachers.

3. The differences in job conditions of the exceptional education teachers were significant when compared to the levels of perceived work-related stress. As DeShong (1981) noted, the particular characteristics of the job are known to create potentially highly stressful conditions. Miller (1979) supported the idea that the particular constraints of the job situation are major contributors to job-related stress.

4. The professional characteristics of the exceptional education teachers surveyed were not found to be significant factors pertaining to the amount of stress perceived.

5. Teachers of specific learning disabled (SLD) students perceived and reported the highest level of job-related stress compared to the other exceptionalities surveyed.

6. Teachers of intellectually gifted (IG) students perceived and reported the least amount of job-related stress compared to the other exceptionalities studied.

7. The results of this study could be utilized by school administrators to develop differentiated stress management plans to help exceptional education teachers cope with their job-related stress.

Recommendations

An analysis of the results of this study suggest the following recommendations:

1. Building level stress management plans could be designed to provide staff development in various strategies for working with disruptive and/or unmotivated students. Other techniques, such as precision teaching, could be presented to address the problem of varying ability levels within a classroom. Faculty committees could be formed to provide input on methods of increasing parental participation, to develop consistent discipline practices within a school, and to establish procedures for school-based recognition of professional excellence.

2. At the district level, stress management plans addressing excessive paperwork, high student/teacher ratios, and allocation of resources could be developed.

3. Further research is needed to investigate various strategies to effectively reduce negative stress and its affects upon exceptional education teachers.

4. Stress assessment instruments and behavioral analysis techniques should be developed which could identify teachers who may be candidates for stress management programs in school districts.

5. Exceptionality areas not included in this study, such as hearing impaired, visually impaired, physically impaired, and speech and language impaired should be studied to identify major stressors and stress perceptions unique and common to these areas.

6. Studies of job-related stress in regular classroom teachers should be conducted in order to isolate those factors that contribute to stress and burnout in these teachers.

7. Non-work-related stress experienced by exceptional education teachers should be investigated in order to determine its impact on the teaching situation, and to develop stress management programs to help teachers cope with personal stresses in their lives.

APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

DESCRIPTIVE DATA FORM

Please complete the following general information questions:

1. Exceptionality of your students: ____________________

2. Age level of your students: Preschool/Kindergarten __ Elementary __
Junior High __ Senior High __

3. Type of class: Self-contained __ Resource room __

4. Number of years in teaching: ____

5. Number of years in present position: ____

6. Highest degree earned: B.A. or B.S.__ M.A. or M.Ed.__ Specialist __

7. Special education certification(s): ____________________
____
____

8. Type of school: Regular __ Special __

SURVEY OF STRESS CAUSES

Please rate each item according to the amount of stress it creates for you in your present teaching assignment.

Use the following scale for all items:

Low feeling of stress (1)	Mild feeling of stress (2)	Moderate feeling of stress (3)	High feeling of stress (4)

1.	Wide range of ability levels in your classroom	1	2	3	4
2.	High student/teacher ratio	1	2	3	4
3.	Inconsistent student discipline practices in school	1	2	3	4
4.	Demands on after school time for work-related activities	1	2	3	4
5.	Disruptive students	1	2	3	4
6.	Pressure of being a good model at all time	1	2	3	4
7.	Excessive paperwork	1	2	3	4
8.	Inadequate school facility (space, working conditions)	1	2	3	4
9.	Lack of community respect toward profession	1	2	3	4
10.	Little recognition for job well done	1	2	3	4
11.	Lack of teaching materials	1	2	3	4
12.	Limited career advancement opportunities	1	2	3	4
13.	Required participation in staff development activities	1	2	3	4
14.	Inadequate planning time	1	2	3	4
15.	Low salary	1	2	3	4
16.	Supervisory duties (playground, bus, lunch, clubs, etc.)	1	2	3	4
17.	Conflicting demands between personal and professional life	1	2	3	4

Low feeling of stress (1)	Mild feeling of stress (2)	Moderate feeling of stress (3)	High feeling of stress (4)

18.	Conflicts with parents	1	2	3	4
19.	Evaluating student progress and giving grades	1	2	3	4
20.	Observation and assessment by administrator	1	2	3	4
21.	Threat of personal injury at school	1	2	3	4
22.	Conflicts with other staff members	1	2	3	4
23.	Lack of support from district administration	1	2	3	4
24.	Inappropriate placements of students into your classroom	1	2	3	4
25.	Lack of communication with support personnel	1	2	3	4
26.	Unmotivated students	1	2	3	4
27.	Lack of parental cooperation	1	2	3	4
28.	Numerous staff meetings and committees	1	2	3	4
29.	Writing and maintaining student IEP's	1	2	3	4
30.	Insufficient time to help each student	1	2	3	4

Please list other stress-related factors:

____

____

____

____

What percentage of the stress in your life is caused by your work situation? __________

TEACHER STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the number that best describes your feeling about each question.

Use the following scale for all questions:

Almost Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

1. Are you happier teaching than you thought you would be? 1 2 3 4
2. Are you satisfied with the progress of your students? 1 2 3 4
3. Do you take school problems home with you? 1 2 3 4
4. Do you find teaching to be a rewarding profession? 1 2 3 4
5. Do you feel uncomfortable when outside observers visit your classroom? 1 2 3 4
6. Are you making progress toward meeting your professional goals? 1 2 3 4
7. Are you overly critical of people who don't live up to your expectations? 1 2 3 4
8. Are you coping with the behavior and/or learning problems of your students? 1 2 3 4
9. Do you have difficulty sleeping after an especially demanding school day? 1 2 3 4
10. Do you feel that your work is appreciated? 1 2 3 4
11. Do you feel guilty if you relax and do nothing during leisure time? 1 2 3 4
12. Are you well prepared and organized in your teaching? 1 2 3 4
13. Do you feel that a conflict exists between your work and your personal life? 1 2 3 4
14. Are you able to maintain adequate control of your emotions? 1 2 3 4
15. Do you worry about your financial situation? 1 2 3 4

Almost Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)	Almost Always (4)

16. Do you take your work frustrations out on loved ones or friends? 1 2 3 4

17. Are you able to admit that you might need help with a work-related problem? 1 2 3 4

18. Do you ever feel burned out from your work? 1 2 3 4

19. Are you able to share your concerns with others? 1 2 3 4

20. Are you ever frustrated with repeated interruptions during the school day? 1 2 3 4

21. Do you feel discouraged when you think about facing another work day? 1 2 3 4

22. Do you find it difficult to relax at the end of a day's work? 1 2 3 4

23. Do you drive yourself too hard? 1 2 3 4

24. Do you feel that teaching is a dead-end career? 1 2 3 4

25. Do you have tension headaches during or at the end of a school day? 1 2 3 4

26. Do you have difficulty understanding what others expect of you? 1 2 3 4

27. Are you optimistic about the future of public education? 1 2 3 4

28. Do you feel that the district administration is sensitive to your needs? 1 2 3 4

29. Do you believe that teaching is hazardous to your health? 1 2 3 4

30. Do you wish that you had chosen another career? 1 2 3 4

ITEM RATING SHEET

Please indicate whether or not each item on the attached research instruments is acceptable for measuring what it is intended to measure.

The Survey of Stress Causes is intended to measure the degree of stress created by each item as it relates to the present teaching assignment of the exceptional education teacher. The items will be rank ordered from high to low causes of stress as a result of data derived from all of the teachers responding.

The Teacher Stress Questionnaire is designed to measure the amount of stress felt by the exceptional education teacher in the work situation. The data will be used to compare stress quotients of teachers from one exceptionality area to another.

Survey of Stress Causes

Item	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
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Teacher Stress Questionnaire

Item	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF STRESSORS ON THE SURVEY OF STRESS CAUSES

APPENDIX B

Means, Standard Deviations, and Variances for each Exceptionality Group on Items 1 through 30 of The Survey of Stress Causes

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
1.	Wide range of ability levels	EMH	2.46	1.07	1.15
		TMR	2.60	1.19	1.43
		PMR	1.51	0.77	0.60
		EH	2.55	0.95	0.90
		SLD	2.65	0.93	0.86
		IG	1.89	0.90	0.81
		Combined	2.36	1.04	1.08
2.	High student/ teacher ratio	EMH	2.41	1.19	1.43
		TMR	2.75	1.04	1.08
		PMR	1.60	0.94	0.89
		EH	2.61	1.18	1.41
		SLD	2.57	1.14	1.30
		IG	1.58	0.73	0.53
		Combined	2.33	1.16	1.35
3.	Inconsistent student discipline practices in school	EMH	2.29	0.96	0.92
		TMR	2.39	1.22	1.50
		PMR	1.46	0.92	0.85
		EH	3.02	1.11	1.23
		SLD	2.42	1.10	1.21
		IG	1.48	0.68	0.47
		Combined	2.26	1.13	1.29
4.	Demands on after school time for work-related activities	EMH	1.95	1.06	1.13
		TMR	1.35	0.62	0.38
		PMR	1.80	1.00	1.01
		EH	2.19	1.07	1.15
		SLD	2.17	0.97	0.95
		IG	2.03	1.11	1.24
		Combined	1.99	1.02	1.05
5.	Disruptive students	EMH	2.26	0.99	0.99
		TMR	2.60	0.96	0.91
		PMR	1.85	0.93	0.87
		EH	3.12	0.96	0.93
		SLD	2.96	0.91	0.84
		IG	1.89	1.01	1.02
		Combined	2.62	1.05	1.11

APPENDIX B--continued

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
6.	Pressure of being a good model at all times	EMH	1.64	0.85	0.73
		TMR	1.75	0.96	0.93
		PMR	1.78	0.90	0.93
		EH	2.08	0.97	0.94
		SLD	1.82	0.92	0.84
		IG	1.79	1.01	1.02
		Combined	1.81	0.92	0.86
7.	Excessive paperwork	EMH	2.81	1.05	1.12
		TMR	2.35	1.09	1.20
		PMR	2.41	1.16	1.34
		EH	2.85	0.97	0.95
		SLD	3.16	0.85	0.73
		IG	2.82	1.00	1.00
		Combined	2.83	1.03	1.06
8.	Inadequate school facility	EMH	1.56	0.86	0.74
		TMR	1.96	1.03	1.07
		PMR	1.92	1.12	1.26
		EH	2.23	1.14	1.31
		SLD	2.28	1.11	1.23
		IG	1.82	1.07	1.14
		Combined	2.00	1.08	1.18
9.	Lack of community respect for profession	EMH	2.15	1.07	1.16
		TMR	1.89	0.99	0.98
		PMR	2.14	1.13	1.27
		EH	2.27	1.05	1.11
		SLD	2.31	1.11	1.25
		IG	1.72	0.84	0.70
		Combined	2.15	1.07	1.15
10.	Little recognition for job well done	EMH	2.32	1.06	1.12
		TMR	2.10	1.13	1.28
		PMR	2.39	1.15	1.34
		EH	2.55	1.01	1.03
		SLD	2.35	1.07	1.15
		IG	1.68	0.76	0.57
		Combined	2.29	1.07	1.14

APPENDIX B--continued

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
11.	Lack of teaching materials	EMH	2.06	1.05	1.12
		TMR	1.92	1.08	1.17
		PMR	2.09	1.11	1.24
		EH	2.57	1.15	1.33
		SLD	2.25	0.99	0.98
		IG	1.51	0.68	0.47
		Combined	2.13	1.06	1.13
12.	Limited career advancement opportunities	EMH	2.30	1.15	1.34
		TMR	2.21	1.13	1.28
		PMR	2.19	1.07	1.16
		EH	2.89	1.08	1.18
		SLD	2.39	1.14	1.31
		IG	1.75	0.78	0.61
		Combined	2.34	1.13	1.27
13.	Required participation in staff development activities	EMH	1.84	0.98	0.97
		TMR	1.82	0.90	0.81
		PMR	1.65	0.96	0.93
		EH	1.85	0.95	0.91
		SLD	1.70	0.81	0.67
		IG	1.48	0.63	0.40
		Combined	1.74	0.89	0.79
14.	Inadequate planning time	EMH	2.26	1.07	1.16
		TMR	1.21	0.41	0.17
		PMR	1.78	0.98	0.97
		EH	2.65	1.02	1.05
		SLD	2.54	1.09	1.19
		IG	1.89	0.97	0.95
		Combined	2.21	1.09	1.19
15.	Low salary	EMH	3.10	1.00	1.00
		TMR	3.14	1.04	1.08
		PMR	3.07	1.19	1.41
		EH	3.29	1.01	1.03
		SLD	2.98	0.98	0.97
		IG	2.44	1.15	1.32
		Combined	3.03	1.06	1.12

APPENDIX B--continued

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
16.	Supervisory duties	EMH	2.03	1.10	1.21
		TMR	1.25	0.44	0.19
		PMR	1.34	0.72	0.53
		EH	1.63	0.84	0.71
		SLD	1.70	0.93	0.86
		IG	1.48	0.73	0.54
		Combined	1.65	0.91	0.83
17.	Conflicting demands between personal and professional life	EMH	1.89	1.04	1.09
		TMR	1.35	0.78	0.60
		PMR	1.68	0.90	0.82
		EH	1.74	0.89	0.80
		SLD	1.94	0.91	0.84
		IG	2.00	1.06	1.14
		Combined	1.81	0.95	0.91
18.	Conflicts with parents	EMH	1.52	0.75	0.56
		TMR	1.71	0.81	0.65
		PMR	1.68	0.93	0.87
		EH	2.08	0.99	0.99
		SLD	1.83	0.90	0.81
		IG	1.82	1.10	1.21
		Combined	1.77	0.91	0.83
19.	Evaluating student progress and giving grades	EMH	2.07	0.90	0.82
		TMR	1.92	0.94	0.88
		PMR	1.73	0.89	0.80
		EH	2.08	0.95	0.90
		SLD	2.38	0.89	0.80
		IG	2.10	0.90	0.81
		Combined	2.11	0.92	0.86
20.	Observation and assessment by administrator	EMH	1.78	0.85	0.73
		TMR	1.60	0.73	0.54
		PMR	2.09	0.99	0.99
		EH	2.10	0.98	0.96
		SLD	1.93	0.94	0.89
		IG	1.48	0.68	0.47
		Combined	1.87	0.91	0.83

APPENDIX B--continued

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
21.	Threat of personal injury at school	EMH	1.44	0.79	0.62
		TMR	1.46	0.79	0.62
		PMR	1.51	0.84	0.70
		EH	1.82	0.98	0.97
		SLD	1.40	0.72	0.52
		IG	1.06	0.25	0.06
		Combined	1.46	0.79	0.63
22.	Conflicts with other staff members	EMH	1.55	0.79	0.62
		TMR	1.64	0.91	0.83
		PMR	1.73	0.97	0.95
		EH	2.04	1.14	1.30
		SLD	1.72	0.93	0.88
		IG	1.27	0.52	0.27
		Combined	1.65	0.91	0.83
23.	Lack of support from district administration	EMH	1.76	0.98	0.96
		TMR	1.64	0.91	0.83
		PMR	1.56	0.95	0.90
		EH	2.31	1.19	1.43
		SLD	1.78	0.94	0.89
		IG	1.31	0.54	0.29
		Combined	1.77	0.99	0.99
24.	Inappropriate placements of students	EMH	2.01	0.89	0.79
		TMR	2.00	1.08	1.18
		PMR	1.58	0.99	0.99
		EH	2.68	1.04	1.09
		SLD	2.38	0.99	0.98
		IG	1.41	0.68	0.46
		Combined	2.11	1.03	1.07
25.	Lack of communication with support personnel	EMH	1.92	1.03	1.07
		TMR	1.57	0.87	0.77
		PMR	1.39	0.73	0.54
		EH	2.02	1.03	1.06
		SLD	1.92	0.90	0.81
		IG	1.27	0.52	0.27
		Combined	1.77	0.93	0.87

APPENDIX B--continued

Item	Stressor	Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance
26.	Unmotivated students	EMH	2.73	0.97	0.94
		TMR	2.10	0.99	0.98
		PMR	1.80	0.95	0.91
		EH	2.68	1.06	1.13
		SLD	3.08	1.01	1.02
		IG	2.34	0.89	0.80
		Combined	2.61	1.07	1.16
27.	Lack of parental cooperation	EMH	2.50	1.10	1.22
		TMR	2.46	1.10	1.22
		PMR	1.95	0.99	0.99
		EH	2.91	1.03	1.07
		SLD	2.68	1.06	1.14
		IG	1.58	0.68	0.46
		Combined	2.45	1.10	1.21
28.	Numerous staff meetings and committees	EMH	1.96	0.95	0.90
		TMR	1.35	0.62	0.38
		PMR	2.00	1.09	1.20
		EH	2.08	1.05	1.12
		SLD	2.09	0.92	0.85
		IG	1.51	0.63	0.40
		Combined	1.93	0.95	0.91
29.	Writing and maintaining student IEP's	EMH	2.66	0.92	0.85
		TMR	2.07	0.94	0.88
		PMR	1.80	0.90	0.81
		EH	2.44	1.05	1.12
		SLD	2.85	1.00	1.00
		IG	2.58	1.01	1.03
		Combined	2.50	1.03	1.06
30.	Insufficient time to help each student	EMH	2.93	1.07	1.15
		TMR	2.78	1.16	1.25
		PMR	2.09	1.15	1.34
		EH	3.14	0.97	0.95
		SLD	3.48	0.71	0.51
		IG	2.24	0.91	0.83
		Combined	2.94	1.08	1.16

APPENDIX C

RANKINGS OF STRESSORS BY EXCEPTIONALITY ON THE SURVEY OF STRESS CAUSES

APPENDIX C

Rankings of Stressors by Exceptionality on The Survey of Stress Causes

Item	Stressor	EMH	TMR	PMR	EH	SLD	IG	Combined
1.	Wide range of ability levels	08	04	26	14	08	11	08
2.	High student/ teacher ratio	09	03	23	11	09	18	10
3.	Inconsistent student discipline practices	12	07	28	02	11	23	12
4.	Demands on after school time	20	27	13	19	19	07	19
5.	Disruptive students	06	05	15	04	05	10	04
6.	Pressure of being a good model	26	19	16	23	25	14	23
7.	Excessive paperwork	03	08	02	07	02	01	03
8.	Inadequate facility	27	15	11	18	17	12	18
9.	Lack of community respect	14	13	05	17	16	16	14
10.	Little recognition for job well done	10	11	03	13	15	17	11
11.	Lack of teaching materials	16	16	06	12	18	20	15
12.	Limited career advancement	11	09	04	06	12	15	09
13.	Required staff development	23	18	22	27	29	22	27
14.	Inadequate time to plan	13	30	17	10	10	09	13
15.	Low salary	01	01	01	01	04	03	01

APPENDIX C--continued

Item	Stressor	EMH	TMR	PMR	EH	SLD	IG	Combined
16.	Supervisory duties	17	29	30	30	28	25	29
17.	Conflicting demands between personal and professional life	22	25	20	29	21	08	22
18.	Conflicts with parents	29	20	21	20	24	13	24
19.	Evaluating student progress	15	17	19	22	14	06	16
20.	Observation and assessment by administrator	24	22	08	26	22	24	21
21.	Threat of personal injury at school	30	24	27	28	30	30	30
22.	Conflicts with other staff members	28	28	18	24	27	28	28
23.	Lack of support from district administration	25	21	25	16	26	27	25
24.	Inappropriate placements of students	18	14	24	09	13	26	17
25.	Lack of communication with support personnel	21	23	29	25	23	29	26
26.	Unmotivated students	04	10	14	08	03	04	05
27.	Lack of parental cooperation	07	06	10	05	07	19	07
28.	Numerous staff meetings	19	26	09	21	20	21	20
29.	Writing and maintaining IEP's	05	12	15	15	06	02	06
30.	Insufficient time to help each student	02	02	07	03	01	05	02

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES REPRESENTING JOB CONDITIONS

APPENDIX D

Means, Standard Deviations, and Variances on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire for the Variables Representing Job Conditions

Exceptionality Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
EMH	63.13	11.73	137.65	65
TMR	58.82*	10.21	104.30	28
PMR	60.17	12.80	164.04	41
EH	62.97	10.36	107.41	47
SLD	67.16*	11.38	129.69	92
IG	55.82*	9.40	88.43	29
Combined	62.83	11.71	137.22	302

*$p < .05$
Scheffe = 7.94

Grade Level of Students	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
Preschool/Kdg.	63.21	10.56	111.61	19
Elementary	64.57	12.40	153.86	152
Junior High	60.20	10.11	102.37	75
Senior High	61.50	11.59	134.54	56

*$p < .05$
Scheffe = 8.21

Type of Class	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
Self-Contained	61.84	11.32	128.21	174
Resource Room	64.17	12.14	147.40	128

APPENDIX D--continued

Type of School	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
Regular School	64.11	11.71	137.24	188
Special School	60.72	11.45	131.20	114

APPENDIX E

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES REPRESENTING PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

APPENDIX E

Means, Standard Deviations, and Variances on The Teacher Stress Questionnaire for the Variables Representing Professional Characteristics

Years of Teaching Experience	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
0	63.88	12.02	144.56	06
1	60.65	11.15	124.56	26
2	64.33	11.47	131.76	18
3	65.80	8.25	68.17	15
4	67.06	11.28	127.37	30
5	63.12	11.74	137.86	25
6	64.64	11.04	121.96	31
7	63.18	12.47	155.62	16
8	67.77	11.36	131.47	18
9	64.32	10.57	111.72	25
10	57.88	6.75	45.61	09
11	61.60	13.73	188.68	15
12	57.57	13.21	174.61	07
13	61.75	16.59	275.35	08
14	59.28	14.12	199.57	07
15	54.50	7.09	50.30	06
16	65.80	18.18	330.70	05
17	54.66	8.73	76.33	03
18	64.85	15.06	226.80	07
19	52.00	0.00	0.00	01
20	56.42	10.72	114.95	07
21	57.00	8.48	72.00	02
22	52.00	7.11	50.66	04
23	50.00	0.00	0.00	01
24	67.00	0.00	0.00	01
25	64.33	16.62	276.33	03
28	52.00	19.79	392.00	02
30	52.66	2.88	8.33	03
31	54.00	0.00	0.00	01

APPENDIX E--continued

Years in Present Position	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
0	59.82	11.72	137.43	29
1	61.11	11.35	128.92	69
2	63.57	12.16	148.06	45
3	65.12	11.59	134.36	40
4	67.65	11.66	135.96	23
5	64.92	9.78	95.75	26
6	68.72	11.86	140.68	22
7	53.91	11.91	141.90	12
8	56.71	10.17	103.57	07
9	61.57	9.36	87.61	07
10	55.42	8.86	78.61	07
11	66.00	19.05	263.00	03
12	59.00	11.31	128.00	02
13	65.40	11.84	140.00	05
14	62.00	7.07	50.00	02
15	57.00	0.00	0.00	01
16	53.00	0.00	0.00	01
17	62.00	0.00	0.00	01

*$p < .05$
Scheffe = 8.10

Highest Degree Earned	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
Bachelors	63.62	11.42	130.57	176
Masters	61.73	12.06	145.51	126

Certification in Field	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	N
Certified	63.14	11.94	142.64	276
Not Certified	59.53	8.40	70.65	26

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William R. Thomas was born and raised in southern Indiana. After graduation from Vincennes Catholic High School, he attended Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana, graduating in 1958. He earned the M.S. degree in counseling and guidance from Indiana State in 1961.

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After one year as a school psychologist in Indiana, he moved to Orlando, Florida, where he has been employed by the Orange County Public Schools for the past 14 years. He was Director of Exceptional Education for the Orange County Public Schools from 1970-81. He presently is the Administrator of Exceptional Education Special Projects for the Orange County Public Schools.

He is currently completing the doctoral program in special education at the University of Florida.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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Charles Forgnone, Chairman
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August, 1982

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